Application of Marine Biotechnology to Assess the Health of Coastal Ecosystems

Request for Proposals for FY 2000

National Sea Grant College Program
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Department of Commerce

SUMMARY: The purpose of this notice is to advise the public that the National Sea Grant College Program (Sea Grant) is entertaining preliminary proposals and subsequently full proposals for innovative research, education and outreach projects that develop and utilize molecular and cellular biology and its applications to assess the levels and effects of contaminants, and pathogens on the health of the coastal ecosystem. In FY 2000 and 2001, Sea Grant expects to make available about $1,500,000 per year to support projects which utilize marine biotechnology (molecular or cellular biology) to address environmental issues effecting the coast. Proposals may request up to $150,000 per year for a maximum of two years, and each proposal must include additional matching funds equivalent to at least 50% of the Federal funds requested.

DATES: Preliminary proposals must be received before 5 pm (local time) on December 1, 1999 by the nearest state Sea Grant College Program or the National Sea Grant Office (NSGO). After evaluation at the NSGO, some proposers will be encouraged to prepare full proposals, which must be received before 5 pm (local time) on February 15, 2000 at the nearest state Sea Grant College Program or NSGO.

ADDRESSES: Preliminary proposals and full proposals must be submitted through the nearest state Sea Grant Program. The addresses of the Sea Grant College Program directors may be found on Sea Grant's home page (http://www.nsgo.seagrant.org/SGDirectors.html) or may also be obtained by contacting the Program Manager at the NSGO (see below). Investigators from non-Sea Grant states may submit their preliminary proposals and proposals directly to the NSGO at: National Sea Grant College Program, R/SG, ATTN: Mrs. Geri Taylor, Environmental Marine Biotechnology, Room 11841, NOAA, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, Maryland 20910.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Linda E. Kupfer, Biotechnology Program Manager, National Sea Grant College Program, R/SG, NOAA, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910, or Mary Robinson, Secretary, NSGO, 301-713-2435; fascimile 301-713-0799;e-mail: linda.kupfer@noaa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Program Authority

Authority: 33 U.S.C. 1121-1131. Catalog of Federal Assistance Number: 11.417, Sea Grant Support.

II. Program Description

Background

Preservation of coastal ecosystems is critically important to the American public. There are growing concerns with the status and health of vital marine resources. Increasing development of coastal areas and pollution from variety of sources now exert relentless pressure upon these environments. Recognition that widespread threats to coastal ecosystems impact human health as well as traditional and emerging economic interests resonates throughout the scientific and management communities. The National Research Council's Ocean Studies Board recently reported in "Challenges on the Horizon," that improving the health of the coastal oceans and sustaining ocean ecology in the face of mounting anthropogenic impacts represent key challenges for ocean research. Realization of the close link between the oceans and human health has sparked interest and involvement from scientists, health care professional and other stakeholders as cited in the Ocean Studies Board's report, "From Monsoons to Microbes."

There are numerous chemical and biological threats to the health of the marine environment, which can effect its potential to sustain essential biodiversity, its ability to fuel valuable economic interests and its effect on human health. These range from severe impacts of point-source contamination and diseases to far more subtle stress imposed by sublethal and non-point source contamination exposure over long time frames. Development of coastal areas and the associated changes in land use patterns apply additional impacts to the coastal ecosystem. The response of the biota to the cumulative stress is now evident in a variety of compelling ways. Specific examples of the widespread nature and ramifications of environmental stress in the coastal environment include:

1) 75% of U.S. commercial fisheries are dependent upon estuaries at some point in their life cycle; however, it is estimated that 40% of estuarine and coastal waters are unfit for swimming or fishing due to excess nutrients, wastewater discharge, viruses and bacteria.

2) Chemicals of anthropogenic origin have been found in coastal waters throughout the United States. In many areas, contaminants such as metals (cadmium, copper and mercury) and organic chemicals (PCBs, PAHs, pesticides) are found in sufficient concentrations to pose major concerns to managers.

3) Human diseases are increasing in part due to anthropogenic causes such as sewage disposal and farming practices.

4) It is estimated that currently 60% of the world population lives in the coastal zones. This is expected to increase significantly in the next decade.

While these problems have continued to mount, our understanding of the concurrent biological and ecological ramifications have not followed in step. Consequently, we are poorly equipped to evaluate these problems and to adequately suggest and implement remedies. Historically, a number of factors have prevented this. We are using for the most part the tools of early twentieth century biology when better ones are available. Techniques with sufficient resolution to discern the mechanisms underlying these problems have rarely been applied within the context of the

health of the marine environment. In addition, the highly interdisciplinary nature of these problems have been difficult to support by traditional funding paths. Also there is a significant lack of understanding in the public domain regarding biotechnology and its applications in the marine environment. An accelerated program of biotechnology education, communication and outreach is critical to public acceptance and trust in the use of marine biotechnology tools.

Overcoming these barriers is the emphasis of this Request for Proposal (RFP). This RFP is meant to support the application of innovative, state of the art molecular and cellular biotechnology research, education and outreach, including interdisciplinary efforts, designed specifically to address tractable problems pertaining to the health of the marine ecosytem.

The same innovative technology that has yielded such profound changes in the way that biomedical research is conducted and has become commonplace in virtually all modern biology laboratories will be applied in the critical area of environmental research. Techniques utilized in a typical molecular and cellular biology laboratory can now be viewed as an accessible biological toolbox that enables researchers to answer insightful questions relating to stress detection and monitoring methodologies. Marine biotechnology has become a mature and powerful driving force that is poised to lead to new developments in our understanding of how marine organisms and the coastal ecosytems respond to pollution, disease and environmental stress.

This RFP builds upon the success of the first two marine biotechnology initiatives funded by Sea Grant. These programs were instrumental in focusing university molecular and cellular biology research on marine issues. The benefits of previously funded research in marine biotechnology include new natural products, new pharmaceuticals, and new tools for fisheries management as well as development of new research systems for fundamental research and new insights into ocean dynamics. This RFP will focus the considerable power of molecular and cellular biology on the marine area, an area of strategic importance that to date has been poorly represented despite its great national importance.

Funding Availability and Priorities

This RFP will fund a nationwide research, education and outreach program that is designed to foster innovative approaches to the study of health of the marine environment. It is designed to encourage collaboration among academics and key resource decision makers to insure that results are distributed in an appropriate fashion among a variety of key user groups ranging from the research and management communities to the general public.

The focus of the research conducted in this initiative addresses a topic of pressing national importance to better understand the marine ecosytem and the impact of contaminants and pathogens on this system. The overarching goal is to add new focus and direction to Sea Grant funded research and to enhance its impact through innovative research studies, interdisciplinary studies, educational programs and outreach efforts. Research proposals should focus on tractable problems and specific, identifiable outcomes which impact the problem. An advisory board of noted scientists, managers and industry representatives was convened to help refine the focus of this RFP.

Research areas may include the application of cellular and molecular biological techniques for the:

(I) Detection and Characterization of Pollutants and Disease on the coastal ecosytem.

(a) Development of novel biosensors (including in situ biosensors) for major groups of pollutants and contaminants (toxics; heavy metals such as cadmium, copper and mercury; organics such as PCBs, PAHs, and pesticides; and endocrine disrupters).

(b) Detection and characterization of sublethal effects of pollutants, contaminants, and pathogens (excluding effects of harmful algal blooms) in ecologically and economically important stocks in the natural environment (excluding aquacultured animals and oysters as these are covered under other competitions).

(c) Identification and detection of biomarkers for the purpose of health and environmental quality assessment.

(II) Education and Outreach:

(a) Public outreach, extension and educational support for understanding and applying marine biotechnology concepts and tools as they relate to sustaining the health of the marine environment through an informed citizenry.

(b) Interdisciplinary workshops and meetings linking marine biotechnology science with scientists, managers, industry representatives and other stakeholders.

About $1,500,000 is available from the National Sea Grant College Program to support these projects in FY2000; an additional $1,500,000 may be available in FY 2001 depending on the overall funding appropriation for the National Sea Grant College Program. Researchers are encouraged to include outreach in their proposals as appropriate. Project activities should include identified milestones for each project year, and the second year of funding is contingent upon availability of funds and submission of an annual report showing satisfactory progress. Projects may request up to $150,000 per year for a maximum of two years and each proposal must include additional matching funds equivalent to at least 50% of the Federal funds requested; for example, a proposal requesting a total of $200,000 in Federal support for two years would have to include at least an additional $100,000 in matching funds. Regardless of any approved indirect cost rate applicable to the award, the maximum dollar amount of allocable indirect costs for which the Department of Commerce will reimburse the recipient shall be the lesser of: (a) the Federal share of the total allocable indirect costs of the award based on the negotiated rate with the cognizant Federal agency as established by audit or negotiation; or (b) the line item amount for the Federal share of indirect costs contained in the approved budget of the award.

III. Eligibility

The National Sea Grant College Program is a network of 29 university-based programs in coastal and Great Lake states

involving more than 300 institutions nationwide in research, outreach, and education. Applications may be submitted by individuals associated with these institutions and also by individuals, public or private corporations, partnerships, or other associations or entities (including non-Sea Grant institutions of higher education, institutes, or non-Federal laboratories), or any State, political subdivision of a State, or agency or officer thereof. Applications by individuals not affiliated with Sea Grant institutions should preferably be collaborative efforts with Sea Grant university investigators.

Awards to successful applicants from Sea Grant institutions will be issued through the local Sea Grant Programs. Awards to successful applicants from institutions from non-Sea Grant states will be issued through the NSGO.

IV. Evaluation Criteria

The evaluation criteria for proposals submitted for support under the "Application of Marine Biotechnology to Assess the Health of the Coastal Ecosystems" are as follows:

(1) Impact of Proposed Project (50%): Significance of the problem addressed or the effect and impact the proposal will have on understanding or solving this problem and supporting the health of the coastal environment; or the need for this activity as a necessary step for the assessment and understanding of the health of the coastal ecosystem; and the degree to which potential users of the results of the proposed activity have been involved in planning the activity and will be involved in the execution of the activity as appropriate.

(2) Scientific or Professional Merit (50%): Degree to which the activity will advance the state of the science or discipline through synthesis of existing information and use and extension of cutting edge as well as state-of-the-art methods; degree to which new approaches to solving problems and exploiting opportunities in resource management or development, or in public outreach on such issues will be employed; degree to which the activity will focus on new types of important or potentially important resources and issues; degree to which investigators are qualified by education, training and/or experience to execute the proposed activity; and record of achievement with previous funding.

V. Selection Procedures

Preliminary proposals must be submitted in order to be eligible to submit a full proposal. Preliminary proposals will be reviewed at the NSGO by a panel composed of government, academic, and industry experts according to the evaluation criteria listed above. The panel will make individual recommendations to the Director of the NSGO regarding which preliminary proposals may be suitable for further consideration. On the basis of the panel's recommendations, the Director of the NSGO will advise proposers whether or not the submission of full proposals is encouraged. Invitation to submit a full proposal does not constitute an indication that the proposal will be funded. Interested parties who are not invited to submit full proposals will not be

precluded from submitting full proposals if they have submitted a preliminary proposal in accordance with the procedures described below.

Full proposals will be received at the individual state Sea Grant Programs (or at the NSGO, if from a non-Sea Grant state) and sent to peer reviewers for written reviews which will be based on the evaluation criteria listed above. The NSGO will obtain the written reviews for proposals from non-Sea Grant states. Complete full proposals and their written reviews will be sent by the state Sea Grant programs to the NSGO to be ranked in accordance with the assigned weights of the above evaluation criteria by an independent peer review panel consisting of government, academic, and industry experts. Panel members will provide individual evaluations on each proposal, but there will be no consensus advice. The NSGO will consider their recommendations and evaluations in the final selection. Only those proposal rated by the panel as either Excellent, Very Good or Good are eligible for funding. For those proposals, the NSGO will: (a) ascertain which proposals best meet the program priorities, as described in Section II under Funding Availability and Priorities, giving consideration to geographic distribution and representation, maintaining a balanced program of research, and not substantially duplicating other projects that are currently funded or are approved for funding by NOAA and other federal agencies, hence, awards may not necessarily be made to the highest-scored proposal; (b) select the proposals to be funded; (c) determine which components of the selected projects will be funded; (d) determine the total duration of funding for each proposal; and (e) determine the amount of funds available for each proposal. Investigators may be asked to modify objectives, work plans, or budgets prior to final approval of the award. Subsequent grant administration procedures will be in accordance with current NOAA grants procedures. A summary statement of the scientific review by the peer panel will be provided to each applicant.

VI. Instructions for Application

Timetable

December 1, 1999, 5 pm (EST) - Preliminary proposals due at state Sea Grant Program or at NSGO for proposals from non Sea Grant states.

December 6, 1999, 5 pm (EST) - Preliminary proposals that were submitted to the state Sea Grant Programs should be transmitted by those programs to the NSGO so as to be received on this date.

February 15, 2000, 5 pm (EST) - Full proposals due at state Sea Grant Program or at NSGO for proposals from non Sea Grant states.

February 21, 2000, 5 pm (EST) - Full proposals submitted to state Sea Grant Program should be transmitted by those programs to the NSGO so as to be received on this date.

March 29, 2000, 5 pm (EST) - Reviewed full proposals due at NSGO.

July 1, 2000, PM EST (approximate) - Funds awarded to selected recipients projects begin.

General Guidelines

The ideal proposal attacks a well-defined, tractable problem that will be or is a significant societal issue. Ideally the outcome of the proposal will make a tangible impact on that issue. The organization or people whose task it will be to make related decisions, or who will be able to make specific use of the projects results, will have been identified and contacted by the Principal Investigator(s). The project will show an understanding of what constitutes necessary and sufficient information for responsible decision-making or for applied use, and will show how that information will be provided by the proposed activity, or in concert with other planned activities.

Research projects are expected to have: a rigorous, hypothesis-based scientific work plan, or a well-defined, logical approach to address a problem; a strong rationale for the proposed research; and a clear and established relationship with the ultimate users of the information. Projects that are solely monitoring efforts using existing technologies are unlikely to be funded.

What to Submit

Preliminary Proposal Guidelines

To prevent the expenditure of effort that may not be successful, proposers must first submit preliminary proposals. Preliminary proposals must be single- or double-spaced, typewritten in at least a 10-point font, and printed on metric A4 (210 mm x 297 mm) or 8 2" x 11" paper. The following information should be included:

(1) Signed title page: The title page should be signed by the Principal Investigator and should clearly identify the program area being addressed by starting the project title with "Environmental Marine Biotechnology". Principal Investigators and collaborators should be identified by affiliation and contact information. The total amount of Federal funds and matching funds being requested should be listed for each budget period, as well as the source of the matching funds; the total should include all subrecipient's budgets on projects involving multiple institutions. Preliminary proposals must include matching funds equivalent to at least 50% of the Federal funds requested.

(2) A concise (2-page limit) description of the project, its expected output or products, the anticipated users of the information, and its anticipated impact. Proposers may wish to use the Evaluation Criteria for additional guidance in preparing the preliminary proposals.

(3)Resumes (1-page limit) of the Principal Investigators.

(4) Proposers are encouraged (but not required) to include a separate page suggesting reviewers that the proposers believe are especially well qualified to review the proposal. Proposers may also designate persons they would prefer not review the proposal, indicating why. These suggestions will be considered during the review process.

Full Proposal Guidelines

Each full proposal must include the first six items listed below: the standard forms included as Item 7 will only be required for proposals selected for funding. All pages should be single- or double-spaced, typewritten in at least a 10-point font, and printed on metric A4 (210 mm x 297 mm) or 8 2" x 11" paper. Brevity will assist reviewers and program staff in dealing effectively with proposals. Therefore, the Project Description may not exceed 15 pages. Tables and visual materials, including figures, charts, graphs, maps, photographs and other pictorial presentations are included in the 15-page limitation; literature citations and letters of support, if any, are not included in the 15-page limitation. Conformance to the 15-page limitation will be strictly enforced. All information needed for review of the proposal should be included in the main text; no appendices, other than support letters, if any, are permitted. Failure to adhere to the above limitations will result in the proposal being rejected without review.

1) Signed Title Page: The title page should be signed by the Principal Investigator and the institutional representative and should clearly identify the program area being addressed by starting the project title "Environmental Marine Biotechnology". The Principal Investigator and institutional representative should be identified by full name, title, organization, telephone number, and address. The total amount of Federal funds being requested should be listed for each budget period; the total should include all subrecipient's budgets on projects involving multiple institutions.

2) Project Summary: This information is very important. Prior to attending the peer review panel meetings, some of the panelists may read only the project summary. Therefore, it is critical that the project summary accurately describes the research being proposed and conveys all essential elements of the research. Applicants are encouraged to use to Sea Grant Project Summary Form 90-2, but may use their own form as long as it provides the same information as the Sea Grant form. The project summary should include: 1. Title: Use the exact title as it appears in the rest of the application. 2. Investigators: List the names and affiliations of each investigator who will significantly contribute to the project. Start with the Principal Investigator. 3. Funding: Funding request for each year of the project, including matching funds if appropriate. 4. Project Period: Start and completion dates. Proposals should request a start date of July 1, 2000, or later. 5. Project Summary: This should include the rationale for the project, the scientific or technical objectives and/or hypotheses to be tested, and a brief summary of work to be completed.

3) Project Description (15-page limit):

(a) Introduction/Background/Justification: Subjects that the investigator(s) may wish to include in this section are: i)

Current state of knowledge; ii) Contributions that the study will make to the particular discipline or subject area; iii) Contributions and impacts the study will make toward addressing the health of the marine ecosystem utilizing marine biotechnology; and iv) As appropriate, contributions of investigator's previously funded research results to current proposal.

(b) Research or Technical Plan: i) Objectives to be achieved, hypotheses to be tested; ii) Plan of work - discuss how stated project objectives will be achieved; and iii) Role of project personnel.

(c) Output: Describe the project outputs and impacts that will enhance the Nation's ability to utilizing marine biotechnology to understand and assess the health of the marine ecosystem.

(d) Coordination with other Program Elements: Describe any coordination with other agency programs or ongoing research efforts. Describe any other proposals that are essential to the success of this proposal.

(e) Literature Cited: Should be included here, but does not count against the 15-page limit.

4) Budget and Budget Justification: There should be a separate budget for each year of the project as well as a cumulative annual budget for the entire project. Applicants are encouraged to use the Sea Grant Budget Form 90-4, but may use their own form as long as it provides the same information as the Sea Grant form. Successful applicants whose awards would be made through a state Sea Grant Program must consult with that state Sea Grant Program budget office to ensure that all necessary overhead costs are included. Subcontracts should have a separate budget page. Matching funds must be indicated if required; failure to provide adequate matching funds will result in the proposal being rejected without review. Applicants should provide justification for all budget items in sufficient detail to enable the reviewers to evaluate the appropriateness of the funding requested. For all applications, regardless of any approved indirect cost rate applicable to the award, the maximum dollar amount of allocable indirect costs for which the Department of Commerce will re-imburse the Recipient shall be the lesser of: (a) the Federal share of the total allocable indirect costs of the award based on the negotiated rate with the cognizant Federal agency as established by audit or negotiation; or (b) the line item amount for the Federal share of indirect costs contained in the approved budget of the award.

5) Current and Pending Support: Applicants must provide

information on all current and pending support for ongoing projects and proposals, including subsequent funding in the case of continuing grants. All current project support from whatever source (e.g., Federal, State, or local government agencies, private foundations, industrial or other commercial organizations) must be listed. The proposed project and all other projects or activities requiring a portion of time of the Principal Investigator and other senior personnel should be included, even if they receive no Federal salary support from the project(s). The number of person-months per year to be devoted to the projects must be stated, regardless of source of support. Similar information must be provided for all proposals already submitted or submitted concurrently to other possible sponsors, including those within NOAA.

6) Vitae (2 pages maximum per investigator).

7) Standard Application Forms: Applicants may obtain all required application forms at the following Internet website: (http://www.nsgo.seagrant.org/research/rfp/index.html#3), from the state Sea Grant Programs, or from Dr. Linda Kupfer at the NSGO (phone: 301-713-2435 x154 or e-mail: linda.kupfer@noaa.gov). For proposals selected for funding, the following forms must also be submitted:

(a) Standard Forms 424, Application for Federal Assistance, and 424B, Assurances - Non-Construction Programs, (Rev 4-88). Applications should clearly identify the program area being addressed by starting the project title with Environmental Marine Biotechnology. Please note that both the Principal Investigator and an administrative contact should be identified in Section 5 of the SF424. For Section 10, applicants should enter "11.417" for the CFDA Number and Sea Grant Support for the title. The form must contain the original signature of an authorized representative of the applying institution.

(b) Primary Applicant Certifications. All primary applicants must submit a completed Form CD-511, "Certifications Regarding Debarment, Suspension and Other Responsibility Matters; Drug-Free Workplace Requirements and Lobbying", and the following explanations are hereby provided:

(i) Non-Procurement Debarment and Suspension. Prospective participants (as defined at 15 CFR Part 26, Section 105) are subject to 15 CFR Part 26, "Non-Procurement Debarment and Suspension" and the related section of the certification form prescribed above applies;

(ii) Drug-Free Workplace. Grantees (as defined at 15 CFR Part 26, Section 605) are subject to 15 CFR Part 26, Subpart F,

"Government-wide Requirements for Drug-Free Workplace (Grants)" and the related section of the certification form prescribed above applies;

(iii) Anti-Lobbying. Persons (as defined at 15 CFR Part 28, Section 105) are subject to the lobbying provisions of 31 U.S.C. 1352, "Limitation on use of appropriated funds to influence certain Federal contracting and financial transactions", and the lobbying section of the certification form prescribed above applies to applications/bids for grants, cooperative agreements, and contracts for more than $100,000, and loans and loan guarantees for more than $150,000, or the single family maximum mortgage limit for affected programs, whichever is greater; and

(iv) Anti-Lobbying Disclosures. Any applicant that has paid or will pay for lobbying using any funds must submit an SF-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities", as required under 15 CFR Part 28, Appendix B.

(c) Lower Tier Certifications. Recipients shall require applicants/bidders for subgrants, contracts, subcontracts, or other lower tier covered transactions at any tier under the award to submit, if applicable, a completed Form CD-512, "Certifications Regarding Debarment, Suspension, Ineligibility and Voluntary Exclusion-Lower Tier Covered Transactions and Lobbying" and disclosure form, SF-LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities". Form CD-512 is intended for the use of recipients and should not be transmitted to the Department of Commerce (DOC). SF-LLL submitted by any tier recipient or subrecipient should be submitted to DOC in accordance with the instructions contained in the award document.

VII. How to Submit

Preliminary proposals and proposals must be submitted to the state Sea Grant Programs or, for investigators in non Sea Grant states, directly to the National Sea Grant Office (NSGO), according to the schedule outlined above. Although investigators are not required to submit more than 3 copies of either pre-proposals or full proposals, the normal review process requires 10 copies. Investigators are encouraged to submit sufficient copies for the full review process if they wish all reviewers to receive color, unusually sized (not 8.5" x 11"), or otherwise unusual materials submitted as part of the proposal. Only three copies of the Federally required forms are needed. The addresses of the Sea Grant College Program directors may be found at the following Internet website: (http://www.nsgo.seagrant.org/SGDirectors.html) or may be obtained by contacting the Program Manager, Dr. Linda Kupfer at the NSGO (phone: 301-713-2435 x154 or e-mail:

linda.kupfer@noaa.gov). Pre-proposals and proposals sent to the NSGO should be addressed to: NSGO, R/SG, Attn.: Mrs. Geraldine Taylor, Environmental Marine Biotechnology, 1315 East-West Highway, Room 11806, Silver Spring, MD 20910 (phone number for express mail applications is 301-713-2435).

Applications received after the deadline and applications that deviate from the format described above will be returned to the sender without review. Facsimile transmissions and electronic mail submission of pre-proposals and full proposals will not be accepted.

VIII. Other Requirements

(A) Federal Policies and Procedures - Recipients and subrecipients are subject to all Federal laws and Federal and Department of Commerce (DOC) policies, regulations, and procedures applicable to Federal financial assistance awards.

(B) Past Performance - Unsatisfactory performance under prior Federal awards may result in an application not being considered for funding.

(C) Pre-Award Activities - If applicants incur any costs prior to an award being made, they do so solely at their own risk of not being reimbursed by the Government. Notwithstanding any verbal or written assurance that may have been received, there is no obligation on the part of DOC to cover pre-award costs.

(D) No Obligation for Future Funding - If an application is selected for funding, DOC has no obligation to provide any additional future funding in connection with that award. Renewal of an award to increase funding or extend the period of performance is at the total discretion of DOC.

(E) Delinquent Federal Debts - No award of Federal funds shall be made to an applicant who has an outstanding delinquent Federal debt until either:

(1) The delinquent account is paid in full,

(2) A negotiated repayment schedule is established and at least one payment is received, or

(3) Other arrangements satisfactory to DOC are made.

(F) Name Check Review - All non-profit and for-profit applicants are subject to a name check review process. Name checks are intended to reveal if any key individuals associated with the applicant have been convicted of or are presently facing criminal

charges such as fraud, theft, perjury, or other matters which significantly reflect on the applicant's management honesty or financial integrity.

(G) False Statements - A false statement on an application is grounds for denial or termination of funds and grounds for possible punishment by a fine or imprisonment as provided in 18 U.S.C. 1001.

(H) Intergovernmental Review - Applications for support from the National Sea Grant College Program are not subject to Executive Order 12372, "Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs".

(I) Purchase of American-Made Equipment and Products - Applicants are hereby notified that they will be encouraged, to the greatest extent practicable, to purchase American-made equipment and products with funding provided under this program.

(J) Pursuant to Executive Orders 12876, 12900, and 13021, the Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (DOC/NOAA) is strongly committed to broadening the participation of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI), and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCU) in its educational and research programs. The DOC/NOAA vision, mission, and goals are to achieve full participation by Minority Serving Institutions (MSI) in order to advance the development of human potential, to strengthen the nation’s capacity to provide high-quality education, and to increase opportunities for MSIs to participate in and benefit from Federal Financial Assistance programs. DOC/NOAA encourages all applicants to include meaningful participation of MSIs. Institutions eligible to be considered HBCU/MSIs are listed at the following Internet website: http://www.ed.gov/offices/OCR/99minin.html.

(K) For awards receiving funding for the collection or production of geospatial data (e.g., GIS data layers), the recipient will comply to the maximum extent practicable with E.O. 12906, Coordinating Geographic Data Acquisition and Access, The National Spatial Data Infrastructure, 59 Fed. Reg. 17671 (April 11, 1994). The award recipient shall document all new geospatial data collected or produced using the standard developed by the Federal Geographic Data Center, and make that standardized documentation electronically accessible. The standard can be found at the following Internet website: (http://www.fgdc.gov/standards/standards/html).

Classification

Prior notice and an opportunity for public comments are not required by the Administrative Procedure Act or any other law for this notice concerning grants, benefits, and contracts. Therefore, a regulatory flexibility analysis is not required for purposes of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

This action has been determined to be not significant for purposes of E.O. 12866.

This notice contains collection of information requirements subject to the Paperwork Reduction Act. The Sea Grant Budget Form, 90-4, Sea Grant Summary Form, 90-2, and Standard Forms 424,and 424b have been approved under control numbers 0648-0362, 0648-0362, 0348-0043, and 0348-0040 with average responses estimated to take 15, 20, 45, and 15 minutes, respectively. These estimates include the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments on these estimates or any other aspect of these collections to National Sea Grant College Program, R/SG, NOAA, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910 (Attention: Francis S. Schuler) and to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, Washington, DC 20503 (Attention: NOAA Desk Officer). Notwithstanding any other provision of the law, no person is required to respond to, nor shall any person be subject to a penalty for failure to comply with, a collection of information subject to the requirements of the Paperwork Reduction Act, unless that collection of information displays a currently valid OMB Control Number.

Dated:

Louisa Koch
Deputy Assistant Administrator
Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration